

# Protestant economics

## 1 Introduction

In 1521 the Pope excommunicated Luther who then went into hiding. In his shelter he translated the New Testament in the vernacular, which could become popular because of the recently invented printing press. Protected by his prince, the Elector<sup>i</sup> of Sachsen, who supported Protestantism, he returned to Wittenberg to teach theology at its university. In 1534 he rendered also the Old Testament in German.

Luther gives marriage and therewith the house a central position. He perceives it as one of the three social institutions or stations of life (Germ.: Ständer), next to the church and the state. Everybody should play his or her role in as well the church as the state and the house. To be able to function in the house one should be married as husband and wife. Luther stresses the obligation to marry for everybody without exception. This is important to him, because he rejects fervently and frequently the arguments which the Catholic church used to oblige its priests to stay single<sup>ii</sup>.

Because of its central position, the doctrine of the house (Germ.: Hauslehre) is considered crucial for the members of the Lutheran church. Luther articulates this doctrine already in 1522 in his *Von ehelichen leben* (*About matrimonial life*), in which work he brings together what he has found in the Bible about the behaviour in the house. Paul's Letters to the Colossians (3.18-4.1) and to the Ephesians (5.22-6.9) show the basic Christian rules for the government of the family. To the Colossians the Apostle had written:

*Wives, submit yourselves to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord.*

*Husbands, love your wives, and don't be harsh to them.*

*Children, obey your parents in everything, for this pleases the Lord.*

*Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will be discouraged.*

*Slaves, obey your earthly masters in everything; and do it, not only when their eye is on you and to curry their favour, but in sincerity of heart and reverence for the Lord. Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for human masters, since you know that you will receive an inheritance from the Lord as a reward. It is the Lord Christ you are serving. Anyone who does wrong will be repaid for their wrongs, and there is no favouritism.*

*Masters, provide your slaves with what is right and fair, because you know that you also have a Master in heaven.*

Paul's Letter to the Ephesians expresses the same thoughts, but more extensively.

These very thoughts return in the annex to the small catechism that Luther wrote in 1529, which is called *Die Haustafel* (*The house codes*). This addition was supposed to be framed and put up to the wall in every house as the set of rules for the family. In his *The house codes* Luther does not put forward directions about the government of goods.

So in 1529 the Protestant doctrine of the government of the house, found in the Bible, is ready. What still misses is its sophistication. The Protestant theologians and the vicars are in need of a science of the government of the house too. When an elaborate Protestant economics is going to be published by Justus Menius (1499-1558), a fellow humanist and adherer of the Reformation, Luther heartily supports the publication of this *Oeconomia Christiana* (*Christian economics*), which despite its Latin title is written in the German language. The *Oeconomia Christiana* is published in 1529 also. This work does not only deal with the government of the family but also discusses the management of goods.

This first Lutheran economics has been a bestseller. When it appeared in 1529, the book was printed by 6 publishing houses! Till 1556 it reached 18 circulations<sup>iii</sup>. In 1547 Menius publishes a summary of his *Oeconomia Christiana: Kurtzer Auszug einer gottseligen Haushaltung*<sup>iv</sup> (Eng.: *Short extract of a*

*blessed householding*.) This version reached 9 prints before 1560. From the summary by Menius again a summary will be made. This very succinct extract about the government of the family becomes popular too and reaches at least 12 circulations before 1587<sup>v</sup>. In 1538 the *Oeconomia Christiana* of Menius became translated in Danish by Hans Taussen and in 1545 it became edited in Polish by Jakub Seklucyan<sup>vi</sup>.

After Justus Menius quite some authors have written a Lutheran *Oeconomia* as well. I mention here only: in the Southern Netherlands: Bartholomeaus Battus, *Oeconomia Christiana*, Antwerp, (Gerard Speelmans) 1558 (in Latin, 1581 translated in English, 1584 translated in Dutch); in Germany: Mattheus Lungwitiuss, *Christliches hausregiment (Oeconomie Christiana)*, Leipzig 1615 and in Sweden Laurentius Petri *Oeconomia Christiana*, Uppsala, 1559. Not every *Oeconomia Christiana* has been written by Lutheran one. Many have been written by Calvinist and Puritan authors. For a Catholic one consult the very extensive *Oeconomia Christiana* in French by the Augustinian friar Jean B de Glen (1552-1603), from Liege in the Southern Netherlands, which appeared in 1608 and was translated into German in 1641 by Ambrosius Kolb.

## 2 Summary of *Oeconomia Christiana* by Justus Menius.

### **That God has decreed a realm of two kinds, spiritual and corporeal.**

I Who looks at human life, experiences that God has created a realm of two kinds. The one *is spiritual and eternal in our soul and conscience, so that our eternal life commences and in this realm only our Lord according to his majesty, power, discretion and will has to rule, govern and reign.* (p. 46) This is just what the gospel says when it tells that this is made possible by God, who sent his son to do penance for the human sins and has poured out the Holy Ghost in the hearts of the believers. Read about the glory of this realm the Apostle<sup>vii</sup> (Paul) at several places and especially Col. I and about Christ John 17.

*The other one, however, is a corporeal and external realm, by which the body outwardly and during this temporary life in this world is reigned, which, although it is exterior and material, is no less God's empire, (--)* (p. 46) The difference is that He in the first realm only uses the bible and the Sacraments as means and in the second one also people and natural powers like their reason, strength, etc..

That God has created a corporeal government and one nevertheless has to keep oneself to God's order *is in the word, because he says < Honor your father and your mother >. The Apostles have taught this too.* (p. 46) Read about this exterior and corporeal reigning that God has installed, ordered and imposed 1 Petr.2.

### **The corporeal reign is of two kinds. *Oeconomia* and *Politia*.**

II *And this exterior and corporeal realm is of two kinds too, as namely *Oeconomia*, that is householding (Germ.: *Haushaltung*) and *Politia*, that is country governing (Germ.: *Landregirung*). In the *Oeconomia* or householding is prescribed how every house should be governed in a Christian and really good way; how everybody - man, wife, children, and servants- in accordance with his station and the honor of it should behave towards each other, in such a way that things everywhere in conformity with the command and order of God in the house in a pleasurable way come to pass just and good.* (p. 47-48).

*For there is no doubt that from the *Oeconomia* or householding the *Politia* or country governing should arise like from a well.* (p. 48). About that someone should govern his house as a requirement for becoming a bishop read I Tim. 3. And read Luke 16. 10 about the loyalty in small things as a necessary condition for loyalty in large things.

Both these governments, *Oeconomia* and *Politia*, are implied in the command <You should honor your father and mother><sup>viii</sup>. They are inserted into the creation of nature in such a way that nature no less can do without them than without day and night.

That is why all pagans and nations must have and keep themselves to this work and order of God of the Oeconomia and Politia. In this world this work of God and this order will not come to a stop no more than summer and winter will do.

### **The difference between the pagan and Christian teaching of Oeconomia and Politia.**

III The philosophers have written much about both kinds of government but *they have all failed, because they did not acknowledge or teach that such government also was the empire, work and order of God, with which God has to do, but only thought that both house and country are governed and maintained by human cleverness and reason* (p. 49)

We, Christians, *should before all things know and never doubt that God of the Oeconomia and Politia, that is householding und country government, is the unique creator, master and governor.* To read how King David confirms this in Psalm.127.

*That is why who wants to understand this art, be it householding or country governing, first and almost only should learn to acknowledge, that God is the one, who always will assist him in his station and function, (--) and that he is only a servant (--)* (p. 50).

For who wrongly thinks that he can govern his house on his own without God, will run into trouble, indifferently if things are going well or badly. If he is doing well, without awareness that it is God who gives him what he has, he abuses the goods and his belief and eventually will destroy his whole house, because he does not fear God. If things are going badly without awareness of God, he will not be able to bear his misfortune, because he is on his own and nobody will help him.

*To make that one knows how one should household in a Christian way and at the same time acknowledges what an outrageous, harmful and wicked doctrine it is which teaches that it is forbidden for a Christian to take care of his householding and alimentionation and that one should possess nothing in private but possess and use all goods in common, like the gang of Anabaptists teach together with other mistakes, to this end we want here to show from Scripture and the word of God what is a Christian oeconomia and how one household in honor to God and with a good conscience.* (p. 50/1).

One should discuss the marriage station beforehand, *because it is the marriage station alone that permits particularly the householding.* There is no Oeconomia or whatever householding without marriage, *like the heathen philosophers and especially Xenophon have begun to teach* (p. 51). So we will start with the subject of marriage and *describe what matrimonial life is, from where it comes, how it gives pleasure to God and how one should behave in a Christian and right way.* (p. 51)

### **What matrimonial life is.**

IV *In all stations it is a great comfort in adversity, (--) that one knows that what one does or suffers, one does or suffer on God's command* (p. 51) and that one should not doubt that it pleases God the most, when one does not question this, although all worldly reason immediately opposes this attitude. One therefore should not enter into a station, unless on God's command and unless one knows for true that God has a gracious delight in that work or station. Who blindly plumps into a station, will later regret this.

Therefore all people who enter into the marriage station should be aware that this station is created by God himself and pleases God how difficult the situation on earth may become and that they may expect by way of comfort that God will assist them in all needs with timely council and merciful help. About the creation of man read Gen. 1 and 2 in which verses God says that the male should not be alone.

About the creation of women read Gen 2, 21-24<sup>ix</sup>

This text is a strong comfort for the marriage station, because it tells that He not only created this station *but also shows and promises that He will stay with the spouses and will trouble Himself about them.* (p. 53)

He created them after his image and he blessed them to be fertile and he saw that it was good, says Scripture.

Because of His delight in this creation, nobody should doubt anymore that God will maintain his creation and govern it, just like the sun will be here forever.

The spouses should know that they cannot please God more than by being prepared to do good to Him and call upon Him in distress to help them. For because God commands the marriage station with

much doom and gloom, one can lightly accept that this station is His work and He always will trouble himself about it.

Like the Lord was present with the Israelites in the exodus from Egypt and He has helped them Himself with all their needs, as is shown in Deut. 8.

The pagan philosophers have also written much about the marriage station and praised it, because they have seen that nature taught it and compels man to marry. The same goes for the lawgivers, who gave marriage an important position in the law. They failed however greatly, because *they have not seen – not been able to see – that matrimonial life is a work of God and He wants to have to do that much with the spouses, and this only the Holy Ghost has taught in Scripture, as we do see and hear.* (p. 55)

Having said that marriage is God's own work and order and that what one does in marriage is a matter of service to God, we now will show why God has created, decreed and commanded this station, so that couples may serve and thank God.

### **Why God instituted the marriage station.**

V In the first place God created, instituted and commanded the marriage station *to produce children, as God has dictated.* (p. 55)

About his dictate read Gen. 1, 28:< Be fruitful and multiply.>.

No creature can oppose these powerful words of God that creatures have to grow, impregnate themselves and bear fruit: His words have to express themselves in His creation without human hinder. *A different conclusion is not possible.* (p. 56) From these works God will select some, and he will also make the outcome for everybody different.

Because people are created to multiply themselves and nobody can oppose His work everybody should let himself be used by Him, whatever trouble is asked from him when he does this, and everybody should take into consideration what He likes to be done. In its turn, *everything what man tackles in the name of God will only be a pleasure and a joy in his heart for him and will require almost no effort.*

*For as the Lord has said <for the believer everything is possible.>* (p. 57)

Some people, however, want to be smarter than God and want to become, alone or with others, better than God has created them. They are sinning terribly. *What more terrible thing might be planned by the devil?* (p. 57)

Nevertheless God is so friendly to apply this law < be fruitful and multiply > also to those who misbehave and adds even < It is not good that the male is alone, he should have an assistant > as a warning to the world to be satisfied with God's will and to abstain from such outrage [celibacy DN]. And what schemes does the devil launch! Take for example the doctrine that priests should not marry. This must be a doctrine of the devil himself, *as St Paul in 1Timot. 4<sup>x</sup> has proclaimed.* (p. 58)

Scripture is quite clear. The facts shows also that to stay single as a priest is one of his tricks: because of their being bachelors, priests and nuns believe to end up high in heaven, on top of the angels, but they will be thrown in the muck of the hell.

*The same happens with those wise guys for whom the marriage station is not blocked by law* (p. 59)

but who do not want to marry because of the disadvantages of the married station or because of a fear to become poor on account of the costs of children. Upon them the devils plays his tricks too.

*What happens to them? I will tell you!* (p. 59) If they do not want to become married in the name of God they have to become whore-hoppers in the name of the devil. The devil however does not pay out for they will suffer from a bad conscience for God and disgrace for the people.

*Therefore the second cause why one should become married is precisely to avoid whoring and other terrible vices and God's punishments that follow from them.* (p. 60) About marriage instead of whore-hopping see I Cor. 7.

Usually such people defend themselves with the remark that man is weak but they should know that this no excuse, because He created them weak in order to offer them the possibility – marriage - to conquer their weakness.

They should acknowledge that they need the help of God. Instead they deny His assistance and therefore disgrace themselves for man and God into eternity. To read Rom. I about this disgrace.

*Not only those who flee from the marriage station and do not marry because they fear poverty or another discomfort, do sin* (p. 61) but also those who do marry but for other reasons than the

mentioned ones, for instance to become rich, pay dearly for it. For running into the snare of the devil by those people who marry to become rich read I Tim, 6.

#### **At which the householding should be directed.**

VI *One usually mainly asks about all arts to what purpose they serve and at what goal every art finally is directed. So that it is appropriate here that we will show for which purpose the oeconomia or householding serves, at which it finally should be directed and why God such a government has decreed and installed.* (p. 62)

*The pagan philosophers who wrote about Oeconomia have commonly taught that the householding serves to and should be directed at the goal of acquiring food and becoming rich* (p. 62). Nowadays many householders share this opinion but we are not following it.

*A pious and devout house father should in his house holding not look after or direct his house government at getting much food and becoming very rich. His house holding most certainly should be directed at the rearing of pious, God-fearing, obedient and virtuous children.* (p. 63).

Now the Philosophers and particularly the Stoics also have learned to care for one's fellow man, so that in order to maintain in a common government a common peace and a good order of all, the one helps the other and rightly so. But one should know moreover that for this it is necessary that in order to serve countries and people children have to be reared or else this is worth nothing. (p. 63)

*For if children are mainly drawn towards the fear of God, and are taught the knowledge of God then it will happen automatically, that they will also serve other people and a total common interest. The city will enjoy for God and the world prosperity from the land and people of an unique pious, competent man.* (p. 63) To read for this Prov. 11 and 15. Sodom and Gomorra would not have been destroyed, if somebody in these cities had asked for God.

That is why, if one wants a good Politia, one should start in the Oeconomia with the youth. To educate them properly one should imprint in them the fear of God. Particularly on this subject we will say more later.

*Because we have earlier taught that the householding is particularly commanded to the marriage station,*(p. 64) we will now successively teach what husband and wife is permitted, alone and together, towards each other as well as towards the children, servants and everyone.

#### **What is granted particularly to the man in the government of the house. (Ge.: Hausregiering)**

VII In the first place a husband or house father should possess a really wise and faithful heart towards God. He should know that in this station he does and suffers everything in accordance with the will of God. Moreover he should trust in God *and believe that in all his acting and suffering He will govern and help him, assist him with governing and feeding himself, his wife, child and the whole house and especially graciously ward off and keep away all evil.* (p. 65). This is still today shown<sup>xi</sup>.

*Secondly, he should be no adulterer* (p. 65), but maintain his wife as his only assistant and not decorate himself with others. About that the love of one's wife to read Prov. 4.

To read about how God punishes the adulterer 2Kings 12.

*The third doctrine is that a husband has to love his wife, as the Apostles have taught on many places* (p. 66). About love one notes a large difference between the godless and the godly. A godless husband loves his wife in such a way that he only looks for what he needs from her and as soon as he does not get that anymore, his love will disappear.

A godly pious husband, on the other hand, *looks at his wife as nothing more than the command and will of God, and only because his wife is given to him by God, his creator and master, as assistant and spouse, does he love her as a gift of God because of God, his master, and does he accept her as being good, although there might be something about her, which annoys him, like plainness or poorness.* (p. 66) He is glad that God with such a means protects him from evil-doing and he hopes that God will have patience with his weakness, especially when the couple encounters poverty and infirmities. This is what the Apostles ( I. Kor. II), and King Solomon in Prov. 18 tells. With such a faith they will possess their wives, as if they did not possess them, like St Paul recommends, *because they possess them, love them, sleep with them and use them not in opposition to but in agreement with God's command and will.* (p. 67)

And from what is said follows the fourth doctrine: *the devout husband knows how to keep his wife just, and at the proper moments, reasonable, how to associate with her honestly and pleasantly and how to adapt himself to her ways* (--). (p. 67) Read 1 Petr. 3, who admonishes that he should honor his wife, being the weaker sex, because they are also heirs to the grace of life.

St. Peter means with the weaker sex not only that their body is weaker than that of the male, so that both cannot do the same jobs, but also that women are different and bottle up, what is inflicted to them. So, to prevent discord between both spouses, their husbands should be so wise as to act forgivingly.

Many husbands, however think that they may permit themselves everything in their behavior towards their wife. *Scripture forbids such awkwardness in Eccl. 4.* (p. 69)

A sensible man rather takes Abraham as an example. {p. 69,5- 70,5: Menius reproduces Gen. 16-21, which tells the story of Abraham, his wife Sara and his concubine, the slave Hagar.} *How could the good, pious man have dealt with his wife more beautifully than he did?* (p. 70) Without any doubt Scripture gives in accordance with God's will such instances in order to learn from them.

Count Ludwig<sup>xiii</sup>, the husband of S. Elisabeth of Thuringen, is another example. The devil visited him often to prompt his suspicions but the count stayed loyal to her.

*The fifth doctrine is that he should provide his lovely wife and children by his work with housing and food and defend, protect and shelter them as their head and guardian.* (p. 70/1) To read Gen. 3: and Eph. I. *So the man as head should lead his wife, children and ranks with alimentation and all the rest.* (p. 71)

*The pagan philosophers have taught as well, that to the husband is granted to acquire food and send it into the house, what is proper and necessary.* (p. 71). They failed, however, here too, because they have forgotten to add what lies behind this, which is that one knows where to take it. *That one knows to spot and find exactly this, that is the art if it and therefore we will teach it.* (p. 71)

The philosophers learn that reason and skill of man himself make him find the food and become rich but they have to admit that the human reason and skill are of no avail if God does not want somebody to be successful for many wise, prudent people did not succeed and many bad, simple people fared well.

*What now does Scripture teach about this?* (p. 72) Actually Scripture makes it very clear, that man should work very hard, like God has said *<By the sweat of your face you will eat your bread>*.

Moreover, *<The parents have to gather treasures for their children>* (2 Corinth. 12) and *<House and goods are inherited by parents>* (Prov. 19). (p. 72) God alone gives food but only by way of our labor.

That is why all who are in the marriage station should acknowledge that *God wants from them that with their labor they should look for food for their wife and children, everybody in conformity with the occupation God has called him to.*

*Nobody should, however, be so foolish as to think and expect that his skill, diligence and labor feed him and make him rich.* (p. 72) That is a pagan, godless mistake. God not only wants that one works and looks for food by labor but moreover he forbids considering the food one acquires as the result of one's own accomplishment. Food is the result of God's benediction, like Christ our Lord teaches in Mt. 6.

*This is even especially nicely shown in Gen. 3, where God says to Adam: <Cursed is the field because of you>* (p. 73). God only will bless our fields again, after we have removed the thistles and the thorns by our hard labor.

To read Deut. 11 and Deut. 28. The drift of these two articles is that *we know that where God through his benediction does not provide safety and grants his donations, there all our counsel, plans, skill, prudence, care, trouble, and labor are lost and done for nothing.* (p. 73) To read Mt. 6 It wants to say that one should learn to trust first that God will make your labor fertile and feed you.

Thus the right art of acquiring food and becoming rich is not that one only works as if it only depends on labor and on nothing more, but to learn to receive food and wealth from God. *We should only work because God has commanded and ordered this in put our belief in Him that He will certainly feed us with our wife and children, be it by our work or by other ways and means, just as is pleasing to Him.* (p. 74).

And he who thinks that he only has to labour hard, works for nothing because God will not bless the work of the fool who without belief tortures himself with labour.

But even he who sometimes succeeds in accomplishing something, cannot become glad because of his fear that whatever he has acquired will be destroyed by some of the possible disasters he vividly imagines. *For because it is a unbelieving and godless heart, it cannot ever have peace or be at rest.* (p. 75) To read this in Isaiah 57.

On the other hand, he whose heart has knowledge of God and is believing, knows that he is safe with God and trusts that not only his soul will be taken care of but that his temporary body too will be fed by Him in the way he deserves. He is content with what He gives them, is it by the bushel or by the spoon.

*Therefore a house father will not get dissatisfied with his work and his alimentation comes very easy to him.* (p. 76) To read Prov. 10. It is not only acquired by those who believe without effort but it is kept without trouble as well, for his treasury is the word of God. To read Mt. 6.

About them S. Paul says in 2 Corinth 6 < Who do not have anything but at the same time possess anything>. For they know if they have much that their wealth is temporary and if they do not have much, that God will not leave them alone, because *He has given them His word, by which He assured and promised to give abundantly not only the daily bread but everything which both of them need for the temporary and the eternal life.* (p. 76)

#### **What is granted particularly to the wife in the government of the house.**

VIII A pious, God-fearing and Christian house mother firstly needs to believe precisely that the station in which she is and lives, is, just like the one of her landlord, a divine station, to which God self has called and sent her, and that in that position she has to serve Him following His word and intention with respect to her landlord and children (--). (p. 77) She should not doubt that God will gracefully assist her in this station as he has promised in His holy, almighty and eternal word.

*The second what especially is granted to a woman is that she should give birth to and rear children for this is the work that God has particularly commanded and assigned to her.* (p. 77) This is so difficult and heavy a task that she should also learn how to look for comfort and help.

The comfort for her is to know that it is not God's intention to show his wrath towards this poor creature but that she by such labor and pain knows that she has a gracious and merciful God and father. By this labor God is not merciless or hostile but friendly. He intends *to comfort her, to preserve her with all honor and make her blessed.* We want now to hear what Scripture says about this. (p. 78) {p 78-83: Menius let the reader hear what Scripture says about this. He uses Gen. 3, Gen. 2, 1Tim. 2, John 14, Romans 3 and Gal. 3 to explain that God intends to comfort her with her duty of childbirth.}

*Dear God, who is able to express satisfactorily with words this great and powerful comfort?* ( p. 83)

Here one learns what Salomon had in mind when he wrote: < He who finds a wife, finds what is good and receives favor from the Lord> and at the many other locations where he praises the marriage station. How wrong is the stupid mass of priests, monks and nuns who praise the bachelor station, although Scripture nowhere commands it. Read what St Paul says in Tit. 1.

*That's is why the impudent people (--) who hold the marriage station in contempt should stop with their poisonous mouths and pens or sharpen them on something else.* (p. 84)

I hope they will not be punished by God too heavily. Let them slander and lie. We are satisfied with the pleasure that Scripture praises our station.

*The third what is granted to a wife is that she knows how she should behave and show herself towards her husband.* (p. 85) As to this point Scripture teaches three things. *In the first place a pious blessed wife should be obedient and subject to her husband, as God himself has commanded in Gen. 3.* ( p. 85). The Apostles have taught this later too. To read 1Petr. 3.

In the second place a wife *should be modest towards her husband and others and, as St. Peter teaches, be of a soft and quiet mind.* (p.85). To read Prov. 12 and 11. *Of this we will see now a few examples.* (p. 86)

Abigail in 1Kings 25, is an example of a wife, who saves the house. About her Salomon writes in Prov. 14: <*The wise woman builds her house*>. (p. 86)

An example of a wife who destroys the house is Jezebel because she strangles her husband, in 3Kings 21 and 4Kings 9 and 10. To read about this Prov. 14 too < *a foolish woman tears the house down*) and Prov. 11.

In the third place *a wife should also love (Ge.: liebhaben) her husband and show herself friendly and benevolently towards him, like we read that Ruth did towards her Boas<sup>xiii</sup>. Here one also should not forget that a Christian wife in this love and loyalty (--) because she should have the word and intention of God before her eyes, and that she puts up with her husband, because he is granted and given her by God (p. 87), as told above about the man. If she would not be aware of this, there would not be much difference between Christians and heathens. For the love would be perceived much too carnal and when reluctance or unwillingness would arise this would also become a source of eternal lamentation against which no advice or assistance exists. That is why St Paul teaches: < A spouse should have the other as if she is not his.> (p. 87)*

[p 87-92 Menius relates first the story of S. Elizabeth of Thüringen (1207—1231) as a medieval example of a wife who behaved friendly towards her husband. Then he gives a long account of the life of his contemporary Isabella of Austria (1501-1526)<sup>xiv</sup>, again a noble woman, even a queen, to be admired because she went to great lengths to make the life for her husband acceptable.] These pages are not summarized. DN]

These are wonderful acts, which happen nowadays too and which Christians should observe and perceive as acts of God.

In the fourth place *she should be housely (Ge.: heusslich), this is to say that she should perform no jobs outside the house unless commanded but take care of her house and that she preserves and distributes und uses properly what the Lord by way of her husband's labour and otherwise grants to the house. (p. 93) To preserve what is acquired is as important as to acquire new goods. That's why the honest house mother, who keeps the acquired goods together earns no less honor than the landlord, who acquires them. (p. 93)*

Salomon says in Prov. 14 : <By wise women the house is built, a foolish woman tears the house down >. Everybody observes this. This is why St Paul in Tit. 2 writes that the wife should be housely and with diligence should take care of the duties that are hers.<sup>xv</sup>. If they spend their time outside the house they neglect their task inside the house and *brew at least a bucket of misfortune with their useless bragging (--)*. (p. 93)

*The pagans have been of this opinion also and therefore they commanded that a very virtuous and orderly discipline had to be maintained with their women in all matters. (p. 93) They have not only taught this virtue in written form but also expressed it in paintings, by putting Venus on a tortoise, which suggests that a mother should never leave her house, like a tortoise never leaves it. Now we will teach what both husband and wife is granted in the Oeconomia (p. 94)*

### **How one should educate children**

IX In the 6<sup>th</sup> chapter is partly told at which the householding should be directed, and almost enough about how children should be educated but the order requires to tell here more about education.

As said weal and woe of every house and even every country depends on the education of children. Without any doubt one has to rear children, just like one young calves are bred cows and oxen, into *sensible and brave people, who might be of use and advantage to countries and humans. (p. 95)*

Who will educate his children in this vein starts with teaching them knowledge of the righteous God. They should learn to have God before their eyes, direct their lives towards him and fear God in the first place. To read this in Prov. I

*After this should one should teach the children that they also trust God; acknowledge that they owe all the good to Him and ask Him everything that is necessary for them. Moreover, that they not only pray for their own but for all Christian and general needs. And in the same way thank Him for all benefits we received from God (p. 95) To read that God wants to be the protector of children and is he pleased when they pray to him in Psalm 8.*



Deut. 6 tells that it is the command of God that the parents teach the words of God to their children. Eph. 5 and Prov. 22 and several proverbs make it clear that one should start with teaching them in their young age. A tree which one plants at old age will never give fruits.

*Then it may be necessary in the education that one keeps the children at school and make them study. Because God does not grant his knowledge in any other way than by means of the Holy Scripture, people are needed who are able to study and explain it and serve in other ways.* (p. 96)

Of making them priest, monk or nun, often is said that this is bringing a sacrifice to God but all well considered it is bringing a sacrifice to the stomach, *because whoever has made his child priest, monk or nun for any other reason that he will be well cared for and fed?* (p. 97). One used to send them to the richest, most delightful monasteries and not to the poorest parishes, where priests were needed most. This is the simple truth!

One sees nowadays that the meadow of the popish priests is becoming barren and small, so that nobody wants to send their children to school anymore to make them a priest and soon many villages will have no parish priests any longer. A pious Christian rather would strangle his child than to let him live such a life.

What therefore actually should be mentioned a sacrifice to God, is to send his children to school and have them study Scripture and become a vicar, because of the risk he runs to be persecuted. But who believes in Christ will not doubt that God will reward him and punish the godless.

*Strange, however, that the world does not broadly inquire the hidden, secret and Godly affairs, if the doctrine of the Christian belief is a secret and high doctrine.* (p. 97) Although she inquires after her worldly affairs neither if things should be done differently and is no more inclined to study the arts (than theology). *Now it is after all certain that for the world to continue as world, one will need people [who have studied DN].* (p. 98) That is why a father that wants the good for his child and is smart, sets his mind on having him study, be it Scripture, or law or medicine or another honest good art despite its costs and the mockeries one may expect.

*In the third place parents should not be too weak towards their children nor give them too free a rein, to prevent that they become unruly and learn to despise their parents* (p. 98). The danger of this is that they will be a burden to their parents and schoolteachers in their youth and despise the authorities when grown up, like Absalom and other bad children. This is what Salomon has taught often, like in Prov. 13. Heli, whose children were disobedient to him, is another example. Moreover read 1 Kings 2.. *On the other hand the discipline should have its proper measure and not be just hard and tyrannical but fatherly.* (p. 99) Read Prov. 19 as well as Eph. 5 and Coloss. 3.

{p. 99- 100: Menius vividly narrates the story of the Roman Senator Lucius Manlius<sup>xvi</sup>, who had his son killed for disobedience, this used by him as an example of a disproportionate punishment. }

*So we read too that Saul was nearly hard on his son Jonathan because of unjust causes. From which examples we should learn to keep the discipline within bounds and not abuse fatherly and motherly power.* (p. 100)

*In the fourth place should the parents be active in inciting their children to work and break themselves away from the habit of idleness in their youth.* (p. 100). For God says that everybody should work, so he certainly will not like that children do not do anything. To read 2. Thess.3 about the obligation to work and avoid idleness. The point about the working of children is not only that they do contribute something to acquisition and don't eat their bread without any effort to acquire it but much more that they will this way avoid doing bad things. *As the wise Cato has said: If people have nothing to do they learn to brew disaster and to do evil.* (p. 101)

That is why parents have permanently to be attentive and prevent that they become rogues and come to a dishonest fall. Read Gen. 34 about the fall of the daughter of Jacob, Dinah.

*They should, however, especially pay attention that children do not learn to lie.* (p. 101) Somebody who lies usually steals as well, as the proverb says. Both have to be prevented. To read Eph.4, 25-28, Prov. 21, 6 and 21, 28 about the combination of lying and stealing.

*In the fifth place the parents should be active in helping the children, when their need requires it, to marry in time and become conjugal.* (p. 102) It is only fair to do this, given that God commanded them to get children and placed them under their authority. They should look for a candidate not because of his or her wealth but because God's work is visible in this person.

One often sees parents uphold a possible marriage, because of status differences. This is not only a shame but also a cause for secret engagements and sex before marriage. *See what our smartness pulls off, when we want to do it differently from and better than God!* (p 102)

**What is particularly granted to the children.**

X The only service of children towards God is that they obey and follow their parents. If they do this, God is prepared to be their God, protect them in all ways, give them happiness and salvation, protect them from all evil, help them in all needs and give them a long life on earth.

*In the first place and for all other ones pious children should honestly learn to acknowledge and honor God as their almighty creator and father.* (p. 103) That is to bear his commands in mind, to follow them and to fear his punishments when they don't do that.

Thereto they should look at the examples in Scripture of the wrath of God, who not only punished common individuals like Cain but also powerful kings as Saul, whole nations and even his own people of Israel.

*The children should also learn to pay attention to how God still nowadays does not leave any sin without punishment* (p. 104), as one sees with murderers etc., who only seldom die in peace.

To fear God for children is not sufficient but they should acknowledge as well that He wants to be merciful and shows Himself a father, who is full of love for his children. So they should pray and thank him for all the good: a good health of body and mind, food, a long life for the parents and government and peace and unity.

*Thus both the fear and the belief should at the same time be planted in the young, take root, grow nicely and increase from day to day by God's grace.* (p. 105) Fear without belief brings endless doubts and eventually contempt of God and his mercy.

And moreover, where a fearless belief exists, it cannot fail. Only when this develops into a wild Godless certainty and insolent audacity His contempt and judgment will follow.

That is why young children should do their utmost best *to acknowledge God righteously in the shown way that is to learn to fear Him and at the same time to trust and believe Him. From what the fear of God is learned we have said already often, We have said enough about out of what fear of God is learned, therefore we will now teach a little the same about belief* [and trust in Him DN]. (p.105)

Christ has the almighty goodness and truth of God abundantly offered and promised to them. *For the Lord says in the Gospel: <Let the little children come to me, and don't keep the off, because the kingdom of heaven belongs to them>. Moreover <Your [of the children DN] angels always see the face of my Father in heaven. >.* (p. 105/6)

What more comforting words could be said by God? The children will reach heaven and their position there is already known: it is next to the angels. This is truly a perfect basis for a life of belief.

I will stop here teaching about belief, *because I have no intention to write a complete catechism* (p.106), useful as it might be. Who has to educate children will see for himself what additionally should be taught to them.

*The second what is granted to children is that they should honor their parents, like God has solemnly commanded.* (p. 107) This is the specific command of God for children.

To honor means that a child, in the act of honoring them, looks at the will and order of God and imagines that His order is the best there is and that the child therefore does not want to deviate from it, even if it will be despised for it.

*The third is that pious children should acknowledge that idleness is the only cause of all vice.* (p. 107)

They should have themselves kindly led by their parents to a study of honest arts or else to forthright labor. That God dislikes idleness is told above. I will add still that bad company has to be avoided, which God dislikes too. To read for a ban on both idleness and bad company Prov. 1. *Like also the proverb witnesses: <Because of close companions many a person ends on the scaffold>.* (p. 108)

*The fourth article is that children till they get married should lead a chaste, pure and disciplined life* (p.108) and spend the time till then in a way that is pleasing God. *O what a valuable and noble thing it is when the young (both boys and girls) in discipline and chastity and in obedience to their parents serve God!* (p. 108) [Menius jumps to the subject of maidenhood] No doubt the station of maidenhood offers the best opportunity for living well in the eye of God.

*As well in good as in bad times this station has large advantages over the other ones and especially over the married station, as St Paul says in 1Cor. 7. (p. 108). For them it is easier to recover themselves from difficult situations and to deal with war, famine and death than for people who have the responsibility for their family.*

*When everything goes well and happily, then the maidenhood station also has the advantage that it can use these good days better and can care for all its occupations, be it studying, reading, praying, working, or whatever it may be, with better industry and less impediments than the marriage station, (p. 109) because it can restrict itself to one thing to its liking, while the marriage station has to take care of many things at the same time.*

On the other hand the devil is always busy with attempts to stain the souls and bodies of the maidenhood station. Their souls may be contaminated by the thought that the unmarried women will reach heaven more easily than the married one, *by which the belief in Christ is hurt, denied and destroyed.* (p.110) This thought is the idolatrous whoring of priests, monks and nuns.

Their bodies may be contaminated by the dung of all kinds of impurity, just like one sees the young folks partake in all sorts of villainy. Without the words of God in their hearts they will not be able to resist the devil.

[p. 110, 5-112, 5: Menius shows with the help of 1Cor. 6 that the body should be a temple and that God punishes unchastity. These paragraphs are not summarized.DN]

*If this help to resist his [the devil's DN] temptation in the maidenhood station and to maintain one's body chaste and pure is not sufficient, ( p. 112) then this person should choose for the toil and trouble of the marriage station.*

*And in order that a pious child in the name of God starts such work well, the fifth article is that a child should(-- )not secretly get engaged, as one unfortunately often sees the young folks do. (p. 112/3) This makes God so angry that they will have to pay for it during their whole life. Once they have the lust and love for courting, they should ask the advice of their parents instead.*

That God has forbidden to become engaged behind the back of the parents does not only follow from the fourth commandment and is shown in many examples in Scripture, like the one of Samson and that of Rebecca, but this rule it is also maintained in good governments. In Rome a marriage could not be contracted without the council and participation of the parents.

It is moreover seen with the Greeks, in the verses of the poet Euripides<sup>xvii</sup>, which St Ambrose remembers, when he discusses the marriage of Rebecca.<sup>xviii</sup>

That is why pious children should not get secretly engaged against the wishes of their parents. It goes against worldly honor and against God's command and it usually does not bring happiness and salvation, as one sees every day.

*The sixth and last is that the children, when they grow up (--) remember the benefits received (p. 114) and once their parents and teachers are old, take care of them by nursing and providing food and all necessities. This is implied in God's commandment < Honor your father and your mother>.*

*Moreover, in earlier times it was with many wise and honorable pagans a public and general law that the young had to feed their old and weak parents on penalty of heavy punishments. (p. 114)*

Moreover, God created nature in such a way that some smart animals do this too, like the storks show. That is why in early days an image of the stork was put on the royal scepter, to show that such loyalty has to be estimated highly.

In order to finish with a holy example, of which Scripture has of course many, I think that Tobias<sup>xix</sup> is the most important and useful one. *There is much to learn about the desired attitude of the parents towards their children and in the household in general as well as of the children towards their parents. (p 115/6) Everyone should read it!*

### **About everybody's acquisition, craft and alimentation. How should be taken care of them.**

XI I have to add some additional remarks to what is said in chapter 7 about the house father and the labor, by which he should look for his alimentation. Just working as such- today this, tomorrow that - is not enough. *It is also necessary that everybody knows which is the occupation commanded and ordered to him, (p. 116) in order that he is of use to others and may trust with certainty that God will give him nourishment.*

One sees many people fail with themselves and their trade, because they look at others instead of doing what they should do themselves at the right time. They blame their occupation for their failure, leave their trade or craft and take up a new one.

Others take care of their trade rightly and industriously during a certain period, but once they see that others in a different occupation feed themselves better, drop their own one and start a new occupation. And there are these smartasses, who are actually the biggest fools, who next to the occupation that they have learned and gotten used to and with which they can feed themselves in honor, like monkeys want to practice and imitate from others all occupations and this way often become very poor. *To them happens what is said of donkeys: < If the donkey is doing too well, he will go walking on the ice and from boredom break a leg!> (p. 117)*

This really is craziness. The more occupations one takes upon oneself, the poorer one becomes, as experience shows: *< Seven crafts, fourteen accidents!>, as one is used to say. Moreover: <To want to become very rich is not to become rich.>! (p.117)*

*That is why the wise Philosopher Plato, where he teaches how everything should go in good government, has particularly forbidden to practice more than one craft at the same time as and together with another one, (p, 117/8) as is nowadays the rule in the well governed guilds too. Already the Greek knew that a rider should not sing and a singer should not ride a horse.*

*What do you think why it is and what is the cause that these people perish? I will tell you! (p. 118)*

These people neglect the word and command of God and start things which are not commanded them. Scripture says: *<Everything that does not come from faith is sin.>*. So these occupations on one's own initiative are sins. Now, who sins is an enemy of God and an enemy of God does not receive His blessing. Therefore he goes down and eventually to the bottom.

That everyone has gotten his particular command of God and only who beliefs in it should expect salvation is said sufficiently in chapters 7 and 8. *I want therefore to end with (the remark) that if somebody wants to feed himself gently and well, he has to beware of three things: The first is that he knows what his occupation and employment is, which God has commanded him to take care of it and practice it in belief. (p. 119)*

*The second is that he industriously and continually takes care of such an employment and business, which is commanded to him; is not lazy and negligent in it; does not look up to others and does not accept unfamiliar trades (--). (p. 119)<sup>xx</sup>*

*The third is that he not only takes care of what is his and does what is commanded to him but also that he only takes care of what is his, because he knows that God will not reward him more for several trades than for one. To read about this Prov. 20-28.*

*Finally a house father who thinks about feeding himself should prevent and avoid as much as possible all useless and unnecessary expenses; (p. 120) not purchase and build more than necessary and not employ more people than needed. To read about taking care that others do not eat your capital Prov. 5, 7—11. Like a Greek poet has said too: < Who wants to feed the stomach of a stranger and build houses, good and honest as this may be, he will return to poverty, even if happens to him what he wants. That is his tightened goal.><sup>xxi</sup> (p. 120)*

### **How one should keep the servants**

*XII One should behave towards the servants in such a way that they are mainly drawn to piety. (p. 120). They also should know what is the proper religion. They too are heir to the heavenly goods, so they have a right on religious education as well. So the lords of the house and the women should take care and ascertain that by them or because of them their servants, man-servants and maids, don't neglect such necessary things but rather are invited and compelled to them.*

*How the servants should be used teaches Scripture satisfactorily (p. 121). To read Eccl. 33 and Prov. 29*

*This is its synthesis.(p. 121) Firstly, one should give the servants a proper amount of food. Like Christus says himself in the Gospel: < The worker is worth his keep.>. To which rule pious house people have to keep themselves. (p 121) Those who have their mind set on becoming rich by saving on the bread of the servants and labourers will fail because they often perish in another way, as one sees and those people become aware, who have to household and associate every day with servants. (p. 121)*

On the other hand giving the servants more than their modest part is unhealthy. It makes them insolent (Prov. 29) , as one sees everywhere. With food *one should look for the middle as much as possible* (--). (p. 122)

The second point that Scripture teaches concerns discipline. *The servants should not be left too free* (-- ) *but should be kept in such a way that they know that they are subservient man-servants, not autonomous commanding knights.* (p. 122) Sometimes it may be necessary to beat them. Such chastisement should be applied moderately and with reason. Disciplining should not become tyranny. For the house lords have a Lord in heaven, who will reward each according to his merits. To read Col. 3.

*The third which one is obliged to the servants is that one should make work for them and not allow them too much idleness. This teaches Scripture too.* ( p. 122) To read Eccl. 33 about the dangers of idleness.

*Therefore, in order that the servants do their work all the more diligent and constant, a house lord should his man-servant and a house mother her maid permanently control personally and personally see to it that things go well. Servants are servants, as the saying goes, and do as their nature is, that is why one should not always believe their words.* (p. 123)

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Xenophon writes in his *Oeconomia*<sup>xxii</sup> that the best feeding of the horse is the eye of the master, meaning that he should not trust any servant but should look on him too.

A comparable thing writes Aristotle also: *no dung manures a field better than the one that the housefather carries at his shoes* (p. 123)<sup>xxiii</sup> , meaning that he should control in person the fencing and stabling.

### **How the servants should behave.**

XIII *In Scripture servants and maidservants have their station and life by Divine command and testimony. For the Lord in the Gospel speaks this way : <Blessed is the servant whose master finds him loyal and just in his service.>.* (p. 124) Although this might hurt the flesh and although they are the lowest station in this world, they have the consolation to know that God will accept them in the same way as people from a higher station.

*It, moreover, always gives more certainty to be subject of and to obey someone else than to oversee or govern others,* (p. 124) especially when one knows for certain that such government, within which one serves, is the order of God and gives Him pleasure.

St Paul teaches on several places that the servants, the male as well as the female ones, should obey their master. To read Eph. 5 and Col. 3

Moreover to read 1Timoth. 6 and 1 Peter 2

What more consoling testimony could a station wish than this one. *First Scripture says that it is God's will and order that they serve. Secondly they do not serve people but the Lord Christ. Thirdly He will reward them with eternal goods for their loyal service and in the fourth place Christus has changed Himself into such a station and became the servant of all of us.* (p. 125) Enough reasons to accept one's station and serve our Lord God voluntarily and industriously in it. (p. 125)

On the other hand, a reckless, wild and audacious servant will be frightened, when he hears *that with his presumption, disobedience and disloyalty not only makes his corporeal master on earth angry but also God the almighty in heaven, who had already threatened him that he would punish such disobedience and disloyalty,* (p. 126) because not only his master on earth is damaged but God's doctrine is defamed as well. And nobody can escape the wrath of God.

### **About friendships.**

XIII *There exists between us, Germans, a common proverb which says <With the help of neighbors one builds house and barns>.* We have said also that the householding should be directed at producing and raising capable and pious children, who will become useful for the common benefit of countries and people. From this one can contrive that like common government cannot be maintained without the advice, assistance and attachment of many people, it is also impossible that a house father with his government can do without assistance and advice of other people. (p. 126)

Therefore the old wise have said that one needs good friends for aid and assistance as much as fire and water. They even take it that the other creatures cannot be missed either. *And they say that without human assistance and service no creatures can be useful to mankind, from which it follows that of all creatures next to God a human can be the most helpful and useful to the others.* (p. 127)

*Because Scripture also teaches almost the same, as we soon will hear, therefore it is necessary that every house father has several special friends, to whom he has a sure and certain admission for advice and assistance in times of oppressing shortages* (p. 127) That such good friends are seldom found shows Prov. 20 Such special friendships are not against faith or against Christian love, for we do not teach that one only should put his trust in friends. *We know quite well that this is injustice and against God, like the Prophet says: < Damned be him, who puts his trust in people.>* (p. 127). Neither do we teach that one should practice charity only toward those who are friendly towards us and who show themselves helpful and obliging.

What we do teach is this: Firstly that one can put his trust to help us with all needs in no friend but only in God. God should be asked for help even before one asks one's father and mother. To read Mt 10, 37. Secondly we teach that one should not only help his friends but the enemies also, like the Lord teaches in the Gospel. To read Luke 6, 27.

*One should therefore use good friends like other gifts of God and corporeal means which God has given to us for the sustainment and necessity of this temporary life, like food, drinks, clothing, house, field, cattle, man-servants, maid-servants etc. For friendship is nothing else than an exterior and corporeal association by which one person is prepared to serve another one who has shortages by enduring helping hands, as much as he can do.* (p. 128)

Scripture tells that the Apostles used such association and helping hand often and Christ himself helped Maria, Martha and Lazarus. *About such friendships we want to talk and teach how one should behave honestly with regard to them.* (p. 129)

*The first must be that one acknowledges and imagines that God wants us to accept the assistance and council of several people as means, which we should use. Like Salomon says: <A friend loves always and a brother is found in distress>.* (p. 129) So the person who thinks to be able to live without friends is mistaken. *For to trust only in friends is against faith but to despise the advice and help of friends is to provoke God.* (p. 129)

*The second is that friends have to act sincerely and open without hypocrisy and falseness towards each other.* (p. 129) No people are worse than those who always say what the others want to hear. So a friend says to the other what he has on his mind, regardless how. It is like Salomon says:< Public punishment is better than secret love>. (p. 129)

*In the third place between friends, who want to be Christians, a certain goal and limit should be set, in order that they do not fall into a situation of worldly and carnal love, so often present amongst the pagans and unbelievers.* (p. 129) Such love makes blind and is the cause that a friend does not dare to punish the beloved for his mistakes and defects. It is even a cause of many vices. That is why *love should have its limit and why a good friend is more directed towards the honor and utility of the other than towards what he loves so much in him.* (p. 130)

*Fourthly not only the love but also the punishment should have its limit.* (p. 130) Wise people have learned that *one should know the defects of a friend but not hate them. But this is said too much.* (p. 130) The proper limit is to know the defects but keep the truth for oneself as long as love requires this. About this read 1Pet.4, and Prov.25.

To read Mt.18 and Prov.25, about punishing a friend in case of large shortcomings. Friendship must be maintained or eventually get extinguished in a natural way. For it is better that one make it end gradually and automatically than all of sudden with a great agitation.

*Fifthly it often happens that large, beautiful gifts of God amongst friends cause as large and larger damage than whatever other kinds of failure and defects.* (p. 131) The devil is often present in such situations, who is not satisfied before the man who became rich will value his own thoughts so highly that he forgets and disavows friends and comrades: < Men of honor change their manners, but never for the better>,<sup>xxiv</sup>., as one uses to say.

Therefore one should keep in mind that amongst good friends the one is worth the other. One should not despise any of them. To read Prov. 27, 10. The rich who despise the poor will be punished in due time.

{p. 131-132: Menius presents the fable *The fox and the eagle* of Aesop. He expresses herein l that disloyalty amongst friend never stays without revenge.}

*Finally and in the sixth place one should also be on one's guard against becoming friends with too many people.* (p 132) That more than two or three friends get along well is already exceptional, let go more than three. The danger of jealousy between many friends is imminent. *From this must necessarily grow separation and rancor.* (p 132).

#### **About giving alms and the right use of the goods.**

XV *Now we have taught almost enough about how one should household, acquire goods and food. From which everybody may learn, how he with God and honor may feed his wife and child in the world and may possess and own his goods* (p. 133). Here I will still say a little about how such goods should be used towards others.

*In the first place: that one may have goods and property is sufficiently proven above (by the fact) that God commands to acquire such goods and to cultivate them in order that wife and children are fed from it.* (p. 133)

*The second: that one may enter into commerce, buying and selling with such goods and that God has commanded nobody to spread his goods over the community for free is also clear from what Scripture says.* (p. 133) To read Prov. 16, 11; Prov. 11, 26; Gen. 47; Joh.4, 8 and Kor. 7, 29 to see that commerce is acceptable, provided one does business honestly and in accordance with God's order .

*Third: about giving alms Scripture teaches that one should share with and give to the poor and needy* (p. 134), so that those who are not able to work, are fed. To read about this precept Luke 6 and Rom. 12.

To read about that who gives alms will be rewarded in heaven Prov. 11, 24; Prov. 11, 25; Prov. 19, 17; Mt. 10,42 and Mt. 25,40.

*Fourth: Scripture heralds also in how far one should give* (p.135). God does not want us to give away all we have at once. To read about this Prov. 5 and 2 Kor. 8. *This is not necessary either, because in any case God donates so much that the poor everywhere can be saved without that anyone of them starves. Everybody certainly will, in conformity with how God admonishes him and the case at stake requires, always find the right measure.* (p. 135).

*I want nothing more than that the whole world not only takes St Elizabeth as an example for giving alms but also in all works of mercy,* (p. 135) for this holy, pious queen kept the right middle way. Some people think giving alms is sufficient because God ordered this and promised to reward it with eternal salvation, and meanwhile neglect the belief in Christ.

*But if one criticizes this mistake and tells them not to trust on alms (--) but to become pious and blessed by the belief in Christ as God,* (p. 136) they stop with giving alms, which is a mistake too. It is rather a matter of two separate actions at the same time: belief and work (of mercy), successively towards God and towards the fellow-man.

These means St Elizabeth had applied. She helped the poor, not against God but rather because of God, *as one to the core can see in her biographies.* (p. 136)

#### **About the Holy Cross/ how to comfort oneself in all sorts of distress.**

[p. 136-138. XVI:.. Because through the whole book suffering is suggested. Menius finishes it this work with words of consolation. Not summarized DN]

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<sup>i</sup> An elector was a prince within the Holy Empire, who had the right - with other electors - to choose the Emperor.

<sup>ii</sup> This Luther often has repeated. See Richter, Gerhard, *Oikonomia*, o.c.. p 617-620.

<sup>iii</sup> U. Gause & St. Scholz: *Ehe und Familie im Geist des Luthertums. Die Oeconomia Christiana des Justus Menius (1529)*. Leipzig ( Evangelische Verlagsanstalt) 2012. p. 28-35. The authors put in a row 16 single

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publications and 2 publications within the binder *Vom ehelichen Frieden* (About marriage peace). After 1556 the *Oeconomia Christiana* by Justus Menius will still become reprinted in 1608.

<sup>iv</sup> It became popular as an appendix to Nikolaus Gallus, *Ein Kurtze Ordentliche summa der rechten Wahren Lehre*, Regensburg (Hans Kohl) 1547. See Berendt, o.c. p. 101 and also U. Gause & St. Scholz, o.c. p. 31-33.

<sup>v</sup> Here I follow Berendt, o.c. p. 101. This was only one of the mountain of publications about marriage, that became printed in the second half of the sixteenth century.

<sup>vi</sup> Irmintraut Richarz, o.c. p. 130.

<sup>vii</sup> With 'The Apostle' is referred to St Paul. He became called *the Apostle of the Gentiles* by the Church, because he never belonged to the 12 Apostles around Jesus.

<sup>viii</sup> This reasoning can only be followed if one knows Ex. 20. 12: < Honor your father and your mother, so that you may live long in the land the Lord your God is giving you..>

<sup>ix</sup> Menius paraphrases here sentences from the book Genesis without referring to the locations.

<sup>x</sup> 1Tim. 4 tells amongst other things that some will drop out at the End of times, because they turn down marriage.

<sup>xi</sup> Menius does not proof this.

<sup>xii</sup> Count Ludwig IV (?-1227) of Thuringia married Elizabeth of Hungary (1207-1231), who became famous for her charity and was made a saint by the Roman Catholic Church:

[http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elizabeth\\_of\\_Hungary](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Elizabeth_of_Hungary). Menius on p. 87-89 tells the story of her life as an example to be followed by housemothers.

<sup>xiii</sup> For the story of Ruth and Boas read the Bible book *Ruth*.

<sup>xiv</sup> [http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isabella\\_of\\_Austria](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Isabella_of_Austria). Despite her Habsburg descent, she had strong sympathies for the Protestants and their case.

<sup>xv</sup> St Paul Tit.2 does not literally say that the wife should be housewife, as Menius suggests here. Titus 2, 3-9 can be read as a most succinct summary of Coloss. 3.18-4.1 and Ephes. 5.22-6.9.

<sup>xvi</sup> Lucius Manlius (dictator of Rome in 343 BC) let his son Titus kill, because he, although not allowed to leave his post, left to fight with the enemies, which fight he won. This story is told by Livius in his *Histories*.

<sup>xvii</sup> Euripides (c. 480- c. 406 BC) was a Greek playwright, still famous nowadays because of his theatre plays *Medea*, *Iphigenia in Aulis*, *The Bacchae*, *Electra* and others, which still are often performed

<sup>xviii</sup> St Ambrose (see Chapter 7 for his personal data) in his *De Abraham* (About Abraham) cites and elaborates on a statement of Hermione in Euripides' tragedy *Andromache*. Andromache was the wife of the Trojan hero Hector. After the death of Hector Andromache was kidnapped by Neoptolemus and got a child of him. The barren Hermione, the wife of Neoptolemus, wanted to kill Andromache and the baby of Hermione's husband.

<sup>xix</sup> Menius refers to the *Book of Tobit* (earlier *Book of Tobias*) in the Old Testament, which tells the story of Tobit and also that of his son Tobias. Tobit does many good works, when the Jews are abducted to Assyria, but becomes blind. With the help of the archangel Raphael Tobias succeeds in an assignment to pick up the family money in Israel, to marry and to heal his father from his blindness.

<sup>xx</sup> Supposedly the editors did not find the three Bible citations that Menius mentions here, because they do not give them in in the notes as they often do. I did not find them in the book 2Kings.

<sup>xxi</sup> The editors of the *Oeconomia Christiana* have taken pains to find the citation but not been able to trace the poet who wrote this. It does not ring a bell with me either.

<sup>xxii</sup> Menius refers the *Oeconomicus* XII, 20 of Xenophon .

<sup>xxiii</sup> Ps. Aristotle, *Oeconomicus* I, 6.

<sup>xxiv</sup> Menius here writes Latin: *Honores mutant mores sed numquam in meliores*, which saying he does not translate.